

MEDIA RELEASE

12 January 2015



Now's the time to plan next year's pastures

Now's the time to plan next year's pastures to make sure you have enough winter feed to maximise lamb growth rates and capitalise on the current lamb prices.

That's the message from Grain and Graze 3 WA coordinator Danielle England.

Mrs England said it was important for farmers to plan their pastures just like they plan a crop to get the most out of that part of the rotation.

"The pasture phase of a rotation is important in the WA farming system as it provides a chance to manage grass weeds, provide cheap nitrogen for the following crops, and of-course feeds livestock during winter and spring," she said.

"Grain and Graze has demonstrated many different pasture options for mixed farms over the past four years right across WA.

"It is more than just grazing crops. There are many new high performance winter pastures or summer feeds such as millet or maize that have been successfully tried on many WA farms."

Mrs England said the pasture phase on any mixed farm must supply enough winter feed for lambing ewes, and the Grain and Graze tip is to plan pastures early and plan them well.

Grain and Graze demonstrations have shown that a mix of dry sown pastures (a mix of clovers/medics/serradellas and cereals/canola), combined with grazing crops, will provide lambing and lactating ewes with ample fodder availability until stubbles become available at the end of Spring.

"But this is not the only fodder options we have any more," Mrs England said.

"There are new establishment techniques (such as dry sowing) and new fodder varieties that have opened up a new range of pasture options for WA mixed farmers."

Mrs England said some of the most progressive farmers have a 'trial' paddock every year, one paddock where they try something completely new.

"Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't," she said.

"This is what I'd recommend mixed farmers do. Pick a fodder idea, and go for it!

“It may work, or it may not, but you will have learnt something along the way.”

Grain and Graze 3 is a GRDC funded program, and it will present the findings of its 2014 pasture and grazing crop demonstration sites at the 2015 Crop Updates.

More information on different fodder options can be found on the Grain and Graze website – www.westernaustralia.grainandgraze2.com.au

ENDS....

Sara Hector

Grain & Graze 3 – Communications

M: 0429 043493

E: sarahector@bigpond.com

GRDC Grains Research &
Development Corporation



A regenerating Lucerne stand, September 2014, after being under-sown in a barley crop in May 2013 at the Clegg family property, Badgebup.